

## 36. Courts of Justice in Changanachery.

Mr. Thoma Kurien (Member, Municipal Council, Changanachery) spoke about the need for the extension of the jurisdiction of the Changanachery Munsiff's Court as some of the *pakuthies* of the taluk were under the jurisdiction of other courts. Though the Government fixed the jurisdiction in consideration of facility of communication, etc., the desired effect was not obtained. While the Alleppey, Tiruvalla and Kanjirapalli Courts had each jurisdiction over thirteen *pakuthies* and the Kottayam Munsiff's Court had jurisdiction over fifteen *pakuthies*, the Changanachery court had only eleven *pakuthies* under its jurisdiction.

He urged the necessity of transferring Pulinkunnum *pakuthi* which was under the jurisdiction of the Alleppey Court to that of Changanachery. He also suggested that Kalluppara *pakuthi*, which was under the jurisdiction of the Tiruvalla court or at least the northern portion of it might be transferred to the Changanachery court as the clients of that area had now to pass through Changanachery to go to their court at Tiruvalla and as the number of cases filed in the Tiruvalla court might thereby be reduced, obviating the necessity for the opening of an additional court for Tiruvalla in the near future.

The Member prayed for the partition of Kalluppara *pakuthi* which was naturally divided by the Manimala river and requested that the northern half of that *pakuthi* might be added to Changanachery taluk. He further suggested that the Putuppalli *pakuthi* of the Changanachery taluk under the jurisdiction of the Kottayam Munsiff's court might also be transferred to Changanachery as the Kottayam Munsiff's court had a heavy file and as the necessity of opening an additional court there might be obviated if the Putuppalli *pakuthi* was transferred to the jurisdiction of the Changanachery court. Vazhur and Vellavur *pakuthies* of the Changanachery taluk were now under the jurisdiction of Kanjirapalli Munsiff-Magistrate's court, and the Member prayed for their transfer to Changanachery as those *pakuthies* were hilly tracts, and as the trade thereof was chiefly carried on with the Changanachery town. Besides, the Munsiff at Kanjirapalli had also magisterial work to do, and hence the proposed transfer of jurisdiction would afford some relief to him.

The Member next proposed the shifting of the Munsiff's court to the Taluk Cutcherry premises. The present building in which the Munsiff's court was located was a low, ill ventilated building. The Taluk Cutcherry compound had an area of two acres and there was a vakils' office too there; if another shed was constructed, it would meet all the requirements of the court, the officers, the vakils and the clients. The Member then spoke about the need for extending the Taluk Cutcherry compound by acquiring a compound (one acre and six cents) lying on the eastern side of it. If the above proposals were sanctioned, the Government could save Rs. 360 per annum now spent on account of rent to the present court house. The Member also said that the cost of acquisition of land and the erection of the proposed building would not cost more than Rs. 3,000.

His next request was for the establishment of a First Class Magistrate's court at Changanachery or to invest the local Munsiff with First Class Magistrate's powers.

He pointed out that Changanachery was a densely populated and extensive taluk, that there was considerable commerce there and that the taluk had a Magistrate's court till the end of 1097, which was abolished at the time of the reorganisation of the Land Revenue Department. The Member requested that, if the Government could not grant them a first Class Magistrate's court, at least the Second Class Magistrate's court might be restored to Changanachery. The Member said that at present they had to go 12 miles off to file a complaint or charge a criminal in a Magistrate's court and they found it very difficult to attend that distant court from time to time.

*President's reply.*—As regards the extension of jurisdiction of the Changanachery court, the matter will be re-examined by the Government.

As regards the location of the Munsiff's Court in the Taluk Cutcherry building, the matter will be considered.

### 37. Establishment of a Magistrate's court at Changanachery.

*Mr. Ouseph Oommen* (Member, Changanachery taluk) in the course of his representation said that, after it had been notified in the Gazette of the 27th Medam 1097 that the Magistrate's Court at Changanachery was abolished, the inhabitants of the taluk had been making several representations to the Government regarding their grievances in the matter, but without eliciting any definite reply. He pointed out that, in the session of the Legislative Council held in Tulam, 1099, Government had proposed to reconsider the matter, but nothing had been done so far. He, therefore, prayed that the Magistrate's Court at Changanachery be re-established in the near future, and a long-felt grievance redressed thereby.

*President's reply.*—As I have already stated, the question as to the necessity for the establishment of a Stationary Magistrate's Court at Changanachery is engaging the attention of the Government. Orders will be passed soon.

### 38. Administration of the Police Department.

*Mr. V. R. Gopala Pillai* (Member, Kunnatnad taluk) represented that the one important defect in the administration of the Police Department was the system of recruitment to the Police Force. Physical fitness, *i. e.*, a height of 5 ft. 5 inches and a girth of 32 inches with a prescribed age limit had formed the only basis for recruitment in the force for a long time. An elementary knowledge of Malayalam was latterly prescribed as the educational qualification. No doubt, it was difficult to get educated men at the time when the Department was organised and also subsequently for a number of years. By this old process of recruitment, a good number of men who had no education or family status, character or respectability, secured admission into the force. Some improved by chance and some got dismissed, while the others continued. A total change came over them after admission into the Department and they made use of the Police uniform as a cover to oppress the poor and to commit offences. Many of them were never sober and some had the audacity to appear drunk even in public courts. The Member continued that, in view of the responsible duties the men in the lower ranks of the service had to be entrusted with, it was highly desirable to make some radical changes in the system of recruitment, that the vernacular section of the Education Department was turning out year after year a large number of young men with school leaving certificates, and that those who had physical fitness might with advantage be selected from them, good character, family status and respectability being, as a rule, also taken into account in such selection. The Member observed that, even though the Department had been recently reorganised, the lowest pay fixed for the constabulary was not at all sufficient to attract men of education, that the lowest pay provided for the school leaving men in the Education Department was Rs. 14, and that the pay of the constabulary should therefore be raised to Rs. 15 and the above qualifications prescribed for recruitment to the force. Raising the pay would, the Member said, of course, entail additional expenditure, but he was of opinion that a reduction could then be made in the strength of the force, without detriment to its efficiency.

The Member then suggested that a Travancorean be appointed as Commissioner of Police.

His next suggestion was the abolition of the post of Assistant Superintendents. The dual control exercised by these officers over the Inspectors of Police did not at all contribute to efficiency of work. The powers and duties of the Assistant Superintendents were not well defined. Very often the orders of the Assistant Superintendents and District Superintendents clashed with each other. If the